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October 15, 1997

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Mr. William F. Caton
Acting Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service
CC Docket No. 96-45
EX PARTE PRESENTATION

RECEIVED

OCT 15 1997

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Mr. Caton:

Yesterday, James Coltharp, Senior Director, Public Policy and Susan Murphy, Manager, Education Sales and Marketing of Comcast Corporation met with Timothy Peterson, Deputy Division Chief, Accounting and Audits, Irene Flannery and Emily Hoffnar of the Universal Service Branch of the Common Carrier Bureau. Comcast discussed with the Bureau staff concrete steps Comcast has already taken in the field of online education. Some of these steps are outlined in the attached handout which was distributed at the meeting. Comcast also raised for consideration the potentially negative impacts to the universal service schools and libraries program of exclusionary statewide contracts that might limit abilities of parties to competitively bid for service and thereby deprive schools and libraries of the widest possible choice of providers.

This letter is being filed in original with two duplicates pursuant to the Commission's rules. If you have any questions related to this ex parte, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura H. Phillips
Counsel for Comcast Corporation

cc: Timothy Peterson
Irene Flannery
Emily Hoffnar

Enclosure

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Give America's Schools and Libraries A Real Choice for Technology

**Presented to
The Federal Communications Commission
by Comcast Cable**

October 14, 1997



Overview

- ◆ Background
- ◆ Comcast Education Pledge
- ◆ Comcast K-12 Cable Modem Commitment
- ◆ Comcast Social Contract
- ◆ Progress Report
- ◆ Comcast Education Products & Services
- ◆ Implementation/Pricing Considerations
- ◆ Educator Testimonials
- ◆ Conclusion

Background

- ◆ Schools and libraries view the Universal Service Fund (USF) as a key source to help cover the cost of “getting online.”
- ◆ They are looking for the fastest, most reliable, most cost-effective solution available.
 - Schools, in particular, need high-speed access to effectively integrate the Internet into limited class time and to ensure students remain “focused” while online.
- ◆ Cable providers, such as Comcast, are committed to helping schools and libraries achieve their goals-- and can do it better and more cost effectively than many telephone companies.
- ◆ Schools and libraries want and deserve the right to choose who will get them connected to the Internet.



Comcast Education Pledge

- ◆ Comcast is committed to providing schools and libraries with solutions that are:
 - Practical
 - Scalable
 - High-speed
 - Cost-effective
 - Easy to implement
 - Easy to use
 - Easy to administer on an ongoing basis
 - Responsive to their changing needs



Comcast Education Pledge

- ◆ Why is Comcast better positioned to provide these solutions than telephone companies and others?
 - Most schools are already wired with cable-- which makes it easy to implement Internet connectivity via cable modem technology.
 - Comcast already has long-standing relationships with schools as part of our Cable in the Classroom initiative.
 - Comcast has a local presence-- with teams of management and service staff in every market to respond to educator's needs and issues.



Comcast K-12 Cable Modem Commitment

- ◆ Comcast will assist K-12 schools in their effort to get online by providing the following items *at no cost*.
 - A single cable modem
 - Unlimited, high-speed Internet access
 - School/library e-mail address
 - Access to the Comcast OnlineSchoolyard™ (<http://www.OnlineSchoolyard.com>)
 - » Award-winning K-12 website featuring original content and links to over 500 of the best education sites on the Net
 - » Easy-to-use, point & click, "kid-safe" interface for all ages
 - » Specifically designed for use with a high speed cable modem
 - Parental control (filtering) software
 - Training materials for teaching faculty about the Internet
 - Grant Roadmap for locating funding dollars and for learning more about USF
 - Supplemental curriculum materials (online and paper-based) to help integrate the Internet into the classroom



Comcast

Social Contract for K-12

- ◆ In addition to the provisions outlined in our K-12 Cable Modem Commitment, Comcast will provide:
 - Wiring from the cable drop on the street to the school facility (up to 200' at no cost)
 - Internet Training Workshops for Educators several times throughout the year in each market where modems are commercially deployed



Comcast

Social Contract for Libraries

- ◆ Comcast will provide up to 250 public libraries within each market where cable modems are commercially deployed with the following items *at no cost*:
 - A single cable modem
 - Unlimited, high-speed Internet access
 - Library e-mail address
 - Access to the Comcast OnlineSchoolyard™ (<http://www.OnlineSchoolyard.com>) and other Comcast community websites
 - Parental control (filtering) software (if desired)
 - Grant Roadmap for locating funding dollars and for learning more about USF
 - Wiring from the cable drop on the street to the library facility (up to 200' at no cost)
 - Participation in Internet Training Workshops
- ◆ Additional training support will be made available to library staff and community residents at large with the assistance of a Comcast- and community-based volunteer corps.



Comcast Education Progress Report

- ◆ K-12 activities to date:
 - Nearly 100 schools have been installed across 6 states
 - Total of 175 schools expected to be installed by 12/31/97
- ◆ Library activities to date:
 - Nearly 10 libraries have been installed across 6 states
 - Discussions with community libraries are underway
- ◆ Higher Education activities to date:
 - Towson State University/Comcast partnership formed; dormitory rooms and faculty offices wired; over 400 student subscribers to date (11% of on-campus population)
 - Additional university/college discussions are underway



Comcast

Education Products & Services

- ◆ School/District/Library-Wide Internet Access
- ◆ Additional Education Materials/Services
 - Discounted parental control (filtering) software
 - Education curriculum materials and online support materials for integrating the Internet into the classroom
 - Website development assistance and hosting
 - Personalized training assistance



School/District/Library-Wide Internet Access

- ◆ Comcast will provide school-, district, or library-wide Internet access for multi-station, LAN or WAN environments.
 - Each solution will be customized to the specifications of the school, district, or library.
 - Each solution will utilize a cable modem(s) and a Comcast-developed server(s)- the Comcast Communications Server - for Internet connectivity:
 - » "Turn-key" Pentium-based server developed in partnership with Microsoft and other technical partners
 - » A "headless" solution for minimal administration
 - » 1.544 Mbs downstream speed
 - » Scalable
 - » Full-featured
- ◆ The "free" modem can be applied to the cost of the school/district/library-wide solution.



Comcast Communications Server

◆ Current Features

- IP Addressing
- Firewall
- Caching
- Email
- Newsgroups
- Filtering
- Telnet
- 24x7 Network Support
- Automatic software/
hardware upgrades

◆ Future Features

- Intranet
- Website Staging
- Website Hosting
- Pointcast
- Other



Implementation/Pricing

- ◆ Since most schools are already wired with cable, Comcast can offer connectivity solutions at more competitive pricing.
- ◆ Example:
 - A high school in the New Jersey recently solicited bids from AT&T, MCI , Bell Atlantic, and Comcast to connect 25 computers to the Internet.
 - The Comcast solution could save the school up to 65% in implementation expenses and ongoing expenses.

Saving schools and libraries money makes the Universal Service Fund go further.

This makes it possible for more schools and libraries to get online.



Educator Testimonials

- ◆ Teachers and students who already have Comcast cable modems in their schools are thrilled with their Internet access speed and are grateful for the attention and support they have received from Comcast.
- ◆ Attached are recent testimonials received from:
 - Sue Taskey, Technology Administrator, Brentwood Elementary School, Sarasota, Florida
 - Richard Paul, Librarian, John F. Kennedy Memorial High School, Iselin, New Jersey



Susan Murphy

From: Brentwood [brentwood@home.com]
Sent: Friday, April 25, 1997 12:23 PM
To: SMurphy@comcastpc.com
Subject: Our Fantastic Cable Modem and Kids!

Dear Susan,

We can not begin to thank you (and Comcast) for the wonderful opportunity you have given our students. We really enjoy the fast internet access and easy interface you have provided but there is much more we are truly grateful for.

When we were contacted by Comcast to provide internet access at a speed we could only imagine, we were a little skeptical because our prior experience was with America Online and a 14.4 modem. We were excited about the integration of the internet into instruction but thought we had a long way to go. We were wrong! As soon as we said yes to the cable modem you offered we began finding not only wonderful resources but websites that correlated to our math and reading series. Our students technology education skyrocketed with the skills your webmaster Rich Swier shared with our fourth graders. His patience and friendliness was invaluable. Our kids really enjoyed him very much. After explaining a home page he actually built one with our students. This type of support plus the new resource Too Cool For Grownups is wonderful. The speed of our modem not only holds a child's interest (they have SHORT attention spans!) but also makes completing a lesson in a class period much easier. We are currently a non-networked school, as you know, and access to the internet at one site must service over 1100 students and staff, so the speed is very important so that we can get as many as possible on. Our students and staff have several pages of bookmarks already and are adding every day.

We are utilizing your cable modem constantly to enhance our instructional needs and can not begin to thank you for this opportunity. Please come visit with us at any time and we will share new ideas and websites we have found. Thank you again for all you have helped us accomplish.

Sincerely,
Sue Taskey

Susan Murphy

From: JFK Memorial High School [jfk@home.com]
Sent: Monday, April 28, 1997 8:43 PM
To: smurphy@comcastpc.com
Subject: Cable connection

Dear Susan,

It was good to meet you on Friday and we will get the specifications on our proposed LAN hardware to you as soon as we can. I write to express in print my excitement about the quality of the cable modem connection in our library. It has made a world of difference in the ease with which the use of the Internet can be integrated into the school's curriculum in virtually any subject. Internet use in the library has become a quality resource for both students and teachers rather than the exercise in frustration and futility that it was too often when we were using conventional dial-up modems. With the new connection I can count on a reliable and fast connection that makes instruction on the use of the Net much more productive. Students conduct more effective searches; can locate, access, and evaluate the information they find much more efficiently, and can make way for other students to use the resource in a much more timely manner. In the Information Age, the library, as the school's information resource, must assume a central role in the daily academic life of the school. Effective Internet use and instruction is at the heart of this role, the cable connection to the Net has been a great boon in our journey toward that goal.

Thank You,
Richard Paul, Librarian
John F. Kennedy Memorial High School
Iselin, NJ

Conclusion

- ◆ The FCC should make the most efficient use of the USF to promote school and library connectivity -- the best way to ensure this is to give schools and libraries a choice of technology providers.
- ◆ Comcast is not only committed to providing schools and libraries with the most cost effective Internet solution available -- we are committed to providing solutions that are easy to integrate and responsive to their ever-changing needs.
- ◆ *The public interest will only be served by letting competition drive down the need for USF subsidies. If a statewide contract limits the rights of schools or libraries to choose, there is no guarantee that the most robust and most cost effective solution has been presented.*

The FCC should preserve the school and library's right to choose by ensuring that state-wide contracts are not exclusionary in nature or use.

